



EXHIBIT 2
DATE 1/24/2011
HB

January 21, 2011

Good morning, Chairman Roberts and members to the Health and Human Services subcommittee, my name is Dennis Taylor. I am the policy coordinator for the Montana Children's Initiative (MCI), a provider organization providing children's mental health services, shelter care and foster parent services in virtually every county in the state of Montana.

MCI supports the Addictive and Mental Disorders Division budget as presented to you in the Executive Budget.

MCI asks you to also focus on what is not in the Executive Budget. The AMDD budget does not have a plan to absorb young adults who "age out" of the children's mental health system. A youth with serious emotional disorder or a serious mental illness faces the very real prospect that they will lose services that support them and their families in community based services once they are too old to be eligible to receive children mental health services.

It is not the fall from a cliff that is the problem; it is the sudden stop at the end. Please ensure that there are sufficient funds to guarantee people who are transitioning to adult services have continued support and assistance in their local community. Without additional funds focused on the serious issue of youth "aging out" of services, this budget as it currently proposed, will force young adults with mental issues to be placed on an AMDD waiting list or face the prospect of being placed in Warm Springs and Boulder inappropriately.

Please help MCI address this growing problem.

Thank you for your consideration.



Montana Children's Initiative Provider Association 2011 Legislative Session Agenda

Mission: Working together for an effective efficient system that cares.

Montana Children's Initiative Members

Acadia Montana, Butte
Bitterroot Valley Educational Co-op, Stevensville
Billings Clinic Psychiatric Services, Billings
Excel, Inc., Billings
Florence Crittenton Home & Services, Helena
Intermountain, Helena & Kalispell
Kairos Youth Services, Great Falls
Montana Youth Home RMDC, Helena
Montana State Foster/Adoptive Parent Association
Montana Community Services Inc., Billings
New Day, Billings
Partnership for Children, Missoula
Watson Children's Shelter, Missoula
Western Montana Mental Health Center, Missoula, Kalispell, Butte & Bozeman
Yellowstone Boys & Girls Ranch, Billings
Youth Homes, Missoula
Youth Dynamics, Billings, Helena & Kalispell

MCI Legislative Priorities

1. Support increased provider rates and budgets for child welfare, juvenile justice and children's mental health serves.
2. Support continuation and strengthening the DPHHS Rate Commission.
3. Advocate for an initiative or study to address needs of children transitioning/aging out of services.
4. Expand Medicaid coverage for children aging out of foster care to 21 years of age.
5. Expand Healthy Montana Kids mental health benefit package.